



# Working with the WIDA Framework: Facilitator's Retreat

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**8 | P a g e**

# WIDA Performance Definitions - Speaking and Writing Grades K-12

At each grade, toward the end of a given level of English language proficiency, and with instructional support, English language learners will produce...

	Discourse Level	Sentence Level	Word/Phrase Level
	Linguistic Complexity	Language Forms and Conventions	Vocabulary Usage
<b>Level 6 - Reaching</b> Language that meets all criteria through Level 5, Bridging			
<b>Level 5 Bridging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple, complex sentences</li> <li>Organized, cohesive, and coherent expression of ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A variety of grammatical structures matched to purpose</li> <li>A broad range of sentence patterns characteristic of particular content areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical and abstract content-area language, including content-specific collocations</li> <li>Words and expressions with shades of meaning across content areas</li> </ul>
<b>Level 4 Expanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short, expanded, and some complex sentences</li> <li>Organized expression of ideas with emerging cohesion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A variety of grammatical structures</li> <li>Sentence patterns characteristic of particular content areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific and some technical content-area language</li> <li>Words and expressions with expressive meaning through use of collocations and idioms across content areas</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3 Developing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short and some expanded sentences with emerging complexity</li> <li>Expanded expression of one idea or emerging expression of multiple related ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repetitive grammatical structures with occasional variation</li> <li>Sentence patterns across content areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific content language, including cognates and expressions</li> <li>Words or expressions with multiple meanings used across content areas</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2 Emerging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phrases or short sentences</li> <li>Emerging expression of ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formulaic grammatical structures</li> <li>Repetitive phrasal and sentence patterns across content areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General content words and expressions</li> <li>Social and instructional words and expressions across content areas</li> </ul>
<b>Level 1 Entering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Words, phrases, or chunks of language</li> <li>Single words used to represent ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phrase-level grammatical structures</li> <li>Phrasal patterns associated with common social and instructional situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General content-related words</li> <li>Everyday social and instructional words and expressions</li> </ul>

...within sociocultural contexts for language use.

# WIDA Performance Definitions - Listening and Reading Grades K-12

At each grade, toward the end of a given level of English language proficiency, and with instructional support, English language learners will process...

	Discourse Level	Sentence Level	Word/Phrase Level
	Linguistic Complexity	Language Forms and Conventions	Vocabulary Usage
<b>Level 6 - Reaching</b> Language that meets all criteria through Level 5 - Bridging			
<b>Level 5 Bridging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rich descriptive discourse with complex sentences</li> <li>Cohesive and organized related ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compound, complex grammatical constructions (e.g., multiple phrases and clauses)</li> <li>A broad range of sentence patterns characteristic of particular content areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical and abstract content-area language, including content-specific collocations</li> <li>Words and expressions with shades of meaning across content areas</li> </ul>
<b>Level 4 Expanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connected discourse with a variety of sentences</li> <li>Expanded related ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A variety of complex grammatical constructions</li> <li>Sentence patterns characteristic of particular content areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific and some technical content-area language</li> <li>Words or expressions with multiple meanings across content areas</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3 Developing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discourse with a series of extended sentences</li> <li>Related ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compound and some complex (e.g., noun phrase, verb phrase, prepositional phrase) grammatical constructions</li> <li>Sentence patterns across content areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific content language, including expressions</li> <li>Words and expressions with common collocations and idioms across content areas</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2 Emerging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple related simple sentences</li> <li>An idea with details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compound grammatical constructions</li> <li>Repetitive phrasal and sentence patterns across content areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General content words and expressions, including cognates</li> <li>Social and instructional words and expressions across content areas</li> </ul>
<b>Level 1 Entering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Single statements or questions</li> <li>An idea within words, phrases, or chunks of language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple grammatical constructions (e.g., commands, Wh- questions, declaratives)</li> <li>Common social and instructional forms and patterns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General content-related words</li> <li>Everyday social and instructional words and expressions</li> </ul>

...within sociocultural contexts for language use.

**Figure 2A: The English Language Proficiency Standards and their Abbreviations**

Standard		Abbreviation
English Language Proficiency Standard 1	English language learners <b>communicate</b> for <b>Social</b> and <b>Instructional</b> purposes within the school setting	Social and Instructional <b>language</b>
English Language Proficiency Standard 2	English language learners <b>communicate</b> information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Language Arts</b>	The <b>language</b> of Language Arts
English Language Proficiency Standard 3	English language learners <b>communicate</b> information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Mathematics</b>	The <b>language</b> of Mathematics
English Language Proficiency Standard 4	English language learners <b>communicate</b> information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Science</b>	The <b>language</b> of Science
English Language Proficiency Standard 5	English language learners <b>communicate</b> information, ideas and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of <b>Social Studies</b>	The <b>language</b> of Social Studies



## ELP Standard 3: The Language of Mathematics, Formative Framework

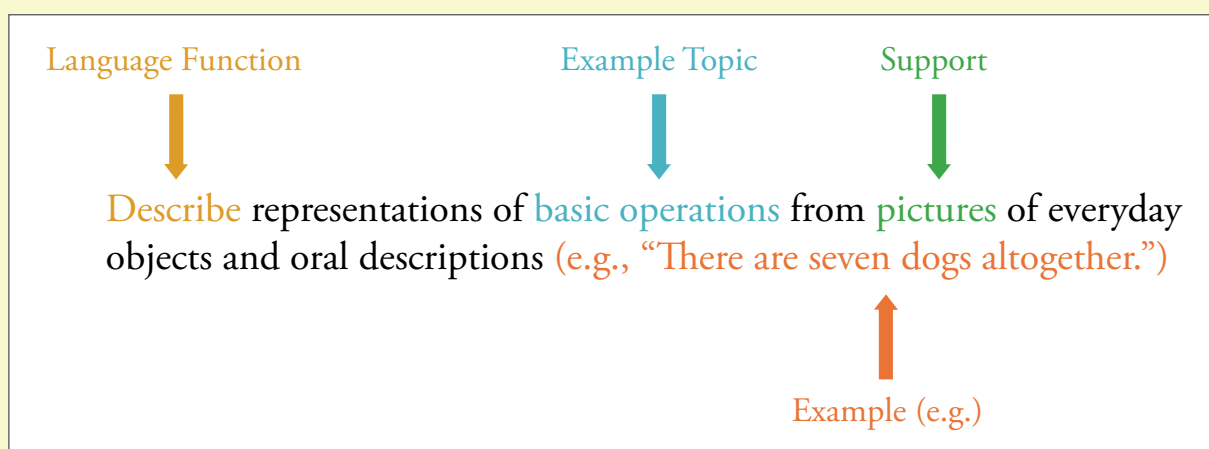
	Example Topics	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6- Reaching
LISTENING	<b>Graphs</b>  <b>Interpretation of data</b>	Shade or color graphs according to oral commands modeled by a teacher (e.g., “Here is a graph. Color this bar red.”)	Identify data in graphs from oral commands or questions modeled by a teacher (e.g., “Which bar shows the most?”)	Locate information on graphs based on oral statements or questions (e.g., “Which bar shows that most people like ice cream?”) and check with a partner	Display comparative data on graphs according to oral commands (e.g., “Fill in the graph to say there are more girls than boys.”) and check with a partner	Interpret data on graphs from oral descriptions (e.g., “Which graph says, ‘Most children are wearing red, some are wearing blue and the fewest are wearing green?’”)	
SPEAKING	<b>Number sense</b>	Provide identifying information that involves real-world numbers (e.g., age, address or telephone number) to a partner	Give examples of things with real-world numbers (e.g., room numbers, bus numbers or calendars) to a partner	Exchange examples of how or when to use numbers outside of school with a partner (e.g., shopping)	Explain how to play games or activities that involve numbers (e.g., sports, board games, hopscotch) to a partner	Tell or make up stories or events that involve numbers	
READING	<b>Standard &amp; metric measurement tools</b>	Use diagrams to guide use of standard or metric measurement tools with a partner	Use labeled diagrams from texts to guide use of standard or metric measurement tools with a partner	Identify key phrases in illustrated text to use standard or metric measurement tools with a partner	Follow illustrated directions from text to compare tools for standard or metric measurement with a partner	Follow illustrated directions from text to use standard or metric measurement tools	
WRITING	<b>Quantity</b>	Produce pictures with numerals or reproduce words associated with quantities from models (e.g., from newspapers or magazines)	Take dictation or make notes of examples of phrases associated with quantities in everyday situations (e.g., “a little of,” “a lot of”)	Provide examples of quantities in context (e.g. “a bunch of grapes”) using phrases or short sentences	Describe uses of quantities in everyday math with illustrated examples using sentences	Explain importance of everyday math using quantities in real-life situations (e.g., when shopping or cooking) using a series of related sentences	

## SECTION 3: MODEL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (MPIS) AND THEIR ELEMENTS

A model performance indicator (MPI) is a single cell within the standards' matrices that describes a specific level of English language proficiency (ELP) for a language domain. An MPI is the smallest unit of a topical strand. Figure 3A shows the three essential elements of an MPI, and an example ("e.g."), which is not essential. Each of these elements is discussed in further detail starting with Section 3.2.

The first word of an MPI is its **language function**; that is, how English language learners (ELLs) process or use language to communicate in a variety of situations. The **example topic** relates the context or backdrop for language interaction within school. The language focus for the content related to the topic may be social, instructional or academic, depending on the standard. Finally, there is some form of **support** (sensory, graphic or interactive) for ELLs through language proficiency level 4, as it provides a necessary avenue for ELLs to access meaning. You will learn more about the optional element of MPIS, the **example** ("e.g."), in section 3.5.

**Figure 3A: Elements of a Model Performance Indicator (MPI)**



### Standards Reference

**Framework:** Summative

**Standard 3:** The language of Mathematics

**Grade level cluster:** 1-2

**Language domain:** Speaking

**English language proficiency level:** 3- Developing

**Example Topic:** Basic operations



### 3.1 Strands of MPIs

A strand of MPIs consists of the five levels of English language proficiency for a given topic and language domain, from Entering (1) through Bridging (5). The horizontal strands of MPIs illustrate the progression of language development for a given grade level cluster. Strands of MPIs characteristically are:

- thematically connected through common example topics or genres that have been identified from state academic content standards
- scaffolded from one language proficiency level (or MPI) to the next, based on the criteria of the Performance Definitions; namely, linguistic complexity, vocabulary usage and language control
- developmentally appropriate, designed for ELLs at a specified grade level cluster
- academically rigorous, with the highest level of English language proficiency (Reaching) corresponding to language expectations of proficient English speakers at the highest grade level of the cluster

#### An Example Topic Strand and an Example Genre Strand

Strands of MPIs for Standard 2—the language of Language Arts—are unique in that both example topics and example genres are identified for each language domain. ELLs need to have the language to access the content associated with the many types of discourse they encounter in Language Arts. In state academic content standards, topics and genres are addressed; subsequently, they are both included as strands.

In Figure 3B, the example topic is introduced and scaffolded across the levels of English language proficiency. As the strand unfolds for writing, the MPIs illustrate expectations for ELLs in third through fifth grades in their use of editing and revising strategies.

**Figure 3B: A Strand of Model Performance Indicators with an Example Topic**

Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging
Produce personal word/phrase lists from labeled pictures and check with a partner for edits and revision	Create phrases/short sentences from models and check with a partner for edits and revision	Edit and revise guided writing (e.g., for conventions and structures) based on teacher feedback	Edit and revise writing (e.g., using word processing or rubrics) based on class or peer reviews	Self-assess to edit and revise writing to produce final drafts

#### **Standards Reference**

**Framework:** Formative

**Standard:** 2- The language of Language Arts

**Grade level cluster:** 3-5

**Language domain:** Writing

**Example topic:** Editing and revising

The genres from both fictional and expository text provide the backdrop for the introduction of specific topics. Genre strands may be used independently or in conjunction with example topics for a given grade level cluster. The same genre strands appear in both the Formative and Summative Frameworks. The difference between the examples in the two frameworks is in the forms of supports. Whereas the Summative Framework relies exclusively on the types of sensory or graphic supports most commonly employed in large-scale assessment, the Formative Framework, being closest to day-to-day classroom practices, contains interactive supports including working with partners, using the native language (L1) or integrating technology to bolster English language development.

In Figure 3C, we see how the type of discourse, as exemplified in the genre, Adventures, influences middle school students' comprehension as they move through the levels of English language proficiency.

**Figure 3C: A Strand of Model Performance Indicators with an Example Genre**

Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging
Identify words or phrases associated with adventures using visual support and word/phrase walls or banks	Answer WH-questions related to adventures using visual support (e.g., "Who is missing?") and share with a peer	Sequence plots of adventures using visual support and share with a peer	Summarize plots of adventures using visual support and share with a peer	Identify cause and effect of events on characters in adventure stories

**Standards Reference**

**Framework:** Formative

**Standard:** 2- The language of Language Arts

**Grade level cluster:** 6-8

**Language domain:** Reading

**Example genre:** Adventures

## 3.2 Language Functions

The following sections describe in more detail each element of an MPI: the language function, support and example topic (refer to Figure 3A). MPIs may also contain an example (e.g.); these individual elements can be applied in the design of curriculum, instruction and assessment for ELLs.

Language functions describe how students communicate a message. They are not to be equated with the cognitive complexity involved in the communication. As shown in Figure 3D, support is built into the MPIs so that even ELLs at lower levels of English language proficiency can demonstrate their understanding of the language associated with content by engaging in higher levels of thinking.

### Figure 3D: Understanding the Cognitive Complexity of Language Functions

ELLs are expected to “sort or classify,” demanding a high level of cognitive engagement that requires students to analyze information. By having diagrams available as support for ELLs, students are able to exhibit this complex thinking even at the Beginning level of English language proficiency.

Level 2 Beginning	<u>Standards Reference</u>
Sort or classify descriptive phrases and diagrams by cycles or processes	<b>Framework:</b> Summative <b>Standard:</b> 4- The language of Science <b>Grade level cluster:</b> 6-8 <b>Language domain:</b> Reading <b>Example Topic:</b> Cycles/Processes

The identical language functions can operate across levels of English language proficiency within a given grade level cluster. What differentiates a lower from higher level of proficiency is the amount and complexity of discourse and/or the expected vocabulary usage, as illustrated in the Performance Definitions (see Figure 5B). For instance, see the partial strand of MPIs in Figure 3E.

### Figure 3E: Repeating Language Functions within a Strand

In the following strand of MPIs, two instances of the language function “Produce...in response” appear. While the Entering or Level 1 ELL is to produce single words, the Beginning or Level 2 student is expected to produce phrases or short sentences, which is reflective of a higher level of language proficiency.

Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Beginning	<u>Standards Reference</u>
Produce words in response to WH-questions about self from picture prompts and models	Produce phrases or short sentences in response to personal, open-ended questions from picture prompts	<b>Framework:</b> Summative <b>Standard:</b> 1- Social and Instructional language <b>Grade level cluster:</b> 3-5 <b>Language domain:</b> Speaking <b>Example Topic:</b> Personal Information/Opinions

Language functions always operate within the context of a standard and strand of MPIs. Although the identical language functions are used throughout the standards’ matrices, each function represents the language specified for the particular standard and topical strand. Charting the instances of language functions across standards gives teachers insight into how they might be used for assessment and instruction.

From the examples in Figure 3F below, we see that the language function “describe” in grade cluster 3-5 appears in:

- Formative and Summative Frameworks
- Productive language domains (speaking and writing)
- Primarily mid-range language proficiency levels (2- Beginning, 3- Developing, 4- Expanding)
- All 5 English language proficiency standards

**Figure 3F: Some Instances of the Language Function “Describe” in MPIs from Grades 3-5**

<p><b>Level 2 Beginning</b></p> <p>Describe health or safety practices around school, home or community from visuals (e.g., pedestrian safety) in L1 or L2</p>	<p><b>Framework:</b> Formative  <b>Standard:</b> 1- Social and Instructional language  <b>Language domain:</b> Writing  <b>Example Topic:</b> Health and Safety</p>
<p><b>Framework:</b> Formative  <b>Standard:</b> 2- The language of Language Arts  <b>Language domain:</b> Speaking  <b>Example Genre:</b> Fantasies</p>	<p><b>Level 2 Beginning</b></p> <p>Describe pictures of imaginary people, objects or situations to peers in L1 or L2</p>
<p><b>Level 2 Beginning</b></p> <p>Describe story elements of various genres supported by illustrations</p>	<p><b>Framework:</b> Summative  <b>Standard:</b> 2- The language of Language Arts  <b>Language domain:</b> Speaking  <b>Example Topic:</b> Story elements and types of genres</p>

<p><b>Level 2 Beginning</b></p> <p>Describe what the fractional parts mean from diagrams or realia in phrases or short sentences</p>	<p><b>Framework:</b> Formative  <b>Standard:</b> 3- The language of Mathematics  <b>Language domain:</b> Writing  <b>Example Topic:</b> Fractions</p>	<p><b>Level 4 Expanding</b></p> <p>Describe strategies or tips for solving problems involving fractions from diagrams in paragraph form</p>
<p><b>Level 3 Developing</b></p> <p>Describe attributes of three-dimensional shapes from labeled models</p>	<p><b>Framework:</b> Summative  <b>Standard:</b> 3- The language of Mathematics  <b>Language domain:</b> Writing  <b>Example Topic:</b> Three-dimensional shapes</p>	

<p><b>Level 2 Beginning</b></p> <p>Describe natural phenomena from real-life examples using general vocabulary (e.g., "This leaf has five points.") in small groups</p>	<p><b>Framework:</b> Formative  <b>Standard:</b> 4- The language of Science  <b>Language domain:</b> Speaking  <b>Example Topic:</b> Nature</p>	
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<p><b>Level 2 Beginning</b></p> <p>Describe communities or regions depicted in pictures or maps</p>	<p><b>Framework:</b> Summative  <b>Standard:</b> 5- The language of Social Studies  <b>Language domain:</b> Writing  <b>Example Topic:</b> Communities &amp; regions</p>	
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The language used to “describe” natural phenomena for Standard 4 is quite unlike that of Standard 3, where students “describe” fractional parts. Working with seashell collections as an example of Standard 4, the language target may be for students to describe tactile or visual qualities, such as “the shell is rough”, “the shell is smooth”. Working with pizzas as an example of Standard 3, on the other hand, the language target may be for students at the Beginning level to practice the phrase, X of Y (e.g., 3 of 5; 2 of 6; 4 of 8) to “describe” a fractional part.

Likewise, although both within the writing domain, the language associated with “describing” Standard 1’s example topic, health or safety practices, is distinct from that for “describing” communities or regions, the example topic for Standard 5. Whereas in Standard 1, Beginning ELLs might be expressing commands, such as “Go out.” or “Stay in.”, in Standard 5, the same level students might be using such expressions as “near” or “far from here.”

In summary, to develop the academic language necessary for success in school, ELLs must have opportunities to use and apply language patterns or discourse associated with each subject or content area appropriate for their level of English language proficiency. The language functions are the entrée into that content-based discourse; teachers of ELLs must consider the language associated with the language function in conjunction with the standard as the backdrop for developing differentiated language objectives or lessons.

### 3.3 Supports

Support is an instructional strategy or tool used to assist students in accessing content necessary for classroom understanding or communication. Support may include teaching techniques, such as modeling, feedback or questioning. Other types of support involve students using visuals or graphics, interacting with others or using their senses to help construct meaning of oral or written language (TESOL, 2006). We believe that support is important for all learners to gain access to meaning through multiple modalities, but it is absolutely essential for ELLs. For this reason, we incorporate support within the MPIs through English language proficiency level 4. We feel that support for ELLs needs to be present in both instruction and assessment on both a formative and summative basis.

Supports within the MPIs may be sensory, graphic or interactive; examples of these different types of supports are found in Figures 3G and H. Although not extensive, these lists offer some suggestions for teachers to incorporate into instruction and assessment of ELLs.

**Figure 3G: Examples of Sensory, Graphic and Interactive Supports**

Sensory Supports	Graphic Supports	Interactive Supports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real-life objects (realia)</li> <li>• Manipulatives</li> <li>• Pictures &amp; photographs</li> <li>• Illustrations, diagrams &amp; drawings</li> <li>• Magazines &amp; newspapers</li> <li>• Physical activities</li> <li>• Videos &amp; Films</li> <li>• Broadcasts</li> <li>• Models &amp; figures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charts</li> <li>• Graphic organizers</li> <li>• Tables</li> <li>• Graphs</li> <li>• Timelines</li> <li>• Number lines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In pairs or partners</li> <li>• In triads or small groups</li> <li>• In a whole group</li> <li>• Using cooperative group structures</li> <li>• With the Internet (Web sites) or software programs</li> <li>• In the native language (L1)</li> <li>• With mentors</li> </ul>

### Sensory Supports

Some sensory supports are applicable across all ELP standards, as exemplified in Figure 3G. Others are specific to the language of a content area. Figure 3H expands the notion of the use of sensory support by giving specific examples for ELP standards 2 through 5. The use of these sensory supports in activities, tasks and projects helps promote the development of students' academic language proficiency.

**Figure 3H: Specific Examples of Sensory Supports**

Supports related to the language of Language Arts	Supports related to the language of Mathematics	Supports related to the language of Science	Supports related to the language of Social Studies
Illustrated word/phrase walls Felt or magnetic figures of story elements Sequence blocks Environmental print Posters or displays Bulletin boards Photographs Cartoons Audio books Songs/Chants	Blocks/Cubes Clocks, sundials and other timekeepers Number lines Models of geometric figures Calculators Protractors Rulers, yard/meter sticks Geoboards Counters Compasses Calendars Coins	Scientific instruments Measurement tools Physical models Natural materials Actual substances, organisms or objects of investigation Posters/Illustrations of processes or cycles	Maps Globes Atlases Compasses Timelines Multicultural artifacts Aerial & satellite photographs Video clips

Adopted from Gottlieb, M. (2006). *Assessing English language learners: Bridges from language proficiency to academic achievement*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.


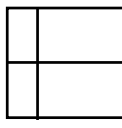
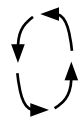

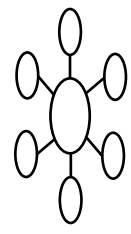
### Graphic Supports

The most commonly used graphic support associated with social, instructional and academic language is the graphic organizer. Graphic organizers, such as semantic maps, venn diagrams or T charts, are useful tools for ELLs. These graphic supports allow students to demonstrate their understanding of ideas and concepts without having to depend on or produce complex and sustained discourse. It cannot be assumed, however, that ELLs understand the concept behind and automatically know how to use particular graphic organizers. Therefore, teachers must model examples of their use and give students time to practice with each one.

Figure 3J provides specific ideas of how graphic organizers may be used with each language proficiency standard. As it does not delineate examples by grade level cluster, teachers' knowledge of their students and the curriculum is important in translating these suggestions into instructional assessment activities.



**Figure 3J): Examples of Use of Graphic Organizers across the ELP Standards**

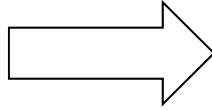
ELP standard	1- Social and Instructional language	2- The language of Language Arts	3- The language of Mathematics	4- The language of Science	5- The language of Social Studies
 <b>Venn Diagrams</b> - Comparing and Contrasting Two Entities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two friends or family members</li> <li>Two traditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two characters</li> <li>Two settings</li> <li>Two genres</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two operations</li> <li>Two geometric figures</li> <li>Two forms of proportion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two body systems or organs</li> <li>Two animals or plants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two conflicts</li> <li>Two forms of government</li> <li>Two forms of transportation</li> </ul>
 <b>T-Charts</b> - Sorting or Categorizing Objects or Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colors</li> <li>Classroom objects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facts/Opinions</li> <li>Points of view</li> <li>Pros/Cons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area/Perimeter</li> <li>Fractions/Decimals</li> <li>Addition/Subtraction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forms of matter</li> <li>Forms of energy</li> <li>Senses</li> <li>Vertebrates/Invertebrates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Types of transportation</li> <li>Types of habitats</li> </ul>
 <b>Cycles</b> - Producing a Series of Connected Events or a Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflict/Resolution</li> <li>School or classroom routines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plot lines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steps in problem-solving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scientific inquiry</li> <li>Life cycles</li> <li>Water cycle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elections in a democracy</li> <li>Passage of a law</li> </ul>
 <b>Cause and Effect</b> - Illustrating a Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom or school rules</li> <li>Health and safety at home or in school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responses of characters to events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Variables in algebraic equations</li> <li>Geometric theorems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chemical reactions</li> <li>Adaptation</li> <li>Weather events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political movements</li> <li>Economic trends</li> </ul>
 <b>Semantic Webs</b> - Connecting Categories to Themes or Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal interests</li> <li>Idiomatic expressions</li> <li>Multiple meanings of words and phrases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Root words and affixes</li> <li>Main idea/Details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Types and features of polygons</li> <li>Types and characteristics of angles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foods and their nutritional ingredients</li> <li>Types and characteristics of rocks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Types of human and civil rights</li> <li>Impact of economic policies</li> </ul>

Adopted from Gottlieb, M. (2006). *Assessing English language learners: Bridges from language proficiency to academic achievement*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

## Practicing Transformations

First, look at the provided Model Performance Indicator (MPI) to identify its elements. Circle the language function, underline the example topic and place a box around the support. Now, let's transform each element.

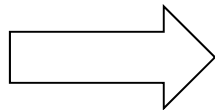
Level 4 Expanding
Compare features of natural phenomena from real-life examples using specific and some technical vocabulary (e.g., "This leaf has five veins while this one has two.") in small groups




Level 4 Expanding
Compare features of natural phenomena from real-life examples using specific and some technical vocabulary (e.g., "This leaf has five veins while this one has two.") in small groups




Level 4 Expanding
Compare features of natural phenomena from real-life examples using specific and some technical vocabulary (e.g., "This leaf has five veins while this one has two.") in small groups




## Matrix Mingle



Find Someone Who...

can state describe vocabulary usage with examples through the levels.	can define the relationship between academic language and content knowledge.	can state the five levels of language acquisition.
can identify the 4 domains of language.	can describe linguistic complexity with examples.	can describe language control with examples through the five levels.

## ELP Standard 4: The Language of Science, Formative Framework

	Example Topics	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	
<b>LISTENING</b>	<b>Force &amp; motion</b>	Explore movement of real-life objects by following oral commands and modeling (e.g., “Push the ball. Watch it move. Make it stop.”)	Move real-life objects by following multi-step oral directions (e.g., “The car goes backwards. The car then goes forwards. Finally, it stops.”)	Compare movement of objects based on oral statements by pointing to pictures or demonstrating using real-life objects (e.g., “Show me which goes fastest: bikes, buses or airplanes.”)	Predict movement of objects by pointing to pictures or demonstrating based on oral statements (e.g., “Show what happens when you let go of balloons.”)	Role play effects of force on motion through gestures or demonstration based on oral scenarios	<b>Level 6 - Reading</b>
<b>SPEAKING</b>	<b>Earth &amp; sky</b>	Name objects of the earth or sky from observation, photographs or models	Describe objects of the earth or sky from observation, photographs or models (e.g., “The sun is big and yellow.”)	State relationships between objects of earth or sky using diagrams, photographs or models (e.g., “Mercury is closest to the sun.”)	Discuss and show changes in the earth and sky using diagrams, photographs or models (e.g., seasons, day/night)	Report, with details, on topics about the earth and sky (e.g., the Big Dipper) using diagrams, photographs or models	
<b>READING</b>	<b>Natural resources</b>	Select labeled natural resources (e.g., sources of water) to make posters from magazine pictures with a partner	Search for words and pictures in big books or illustrated trade books associated with natural resources (e.g., rain or ice) with a partner	Identify illustrated phrases associated with the use of natural resources in activities (e.g., “go swimming”) with a partner	Classify illustrated sentences associated with the use/non-use of natural resources in activities with a partner	Sequence sentences to show the use of natural resources in activities (e.g., washing clothes)	
<b>WRITING</b>	<b>Renewable &amp; non-renewable resources</b>	Label objects that represent renewable and non-renewable materials from real-life or illustrated examples (e.g., paper, cotton or wool) in L1 or L2	List examples of renewable and non-renewable materials from illustrated word/phrase banks using graphic organizers (e.g., T chart) in L1 or L2	Distinguish between renewable and non-renewable resources from pictures or real-life materials (e.g. using phrases or short sentences with opposites) in L1 or L2	Describe goods made from renewable or non-renewable resources from pictures or real-life materials using sentences	Evaluate usefulness of goods made from renewable and non-renewable resources using a series of related sentences	

## ELD STANDARD 5: The Language of Social Studies

EXAMPLE TOPIC: Historical times & people

**CONNECTION:** *Common Core Reading Standards for Informational Text, Key Ideas and Details #2 (Grade 2):* Identify the main topic of a multi-paragraph text as well as the focus of specific paragraphs within the text. 2. Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps.

**EXAMPLE CONTEXT FOR LANGUAGE USE:** Students research historical times and people using informational texts in preparation for creating a timeline poster.

COGNITIVE FUNCTION: Students at all levels of English language proficiency ANALYZE the connections between different historical times and people.						
READING	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Emerging	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6 – Reaching
	Match pictures with information about historical times and people from illustrated texts with a partner	Identify important information about historical times and people from illustrated texts with a partner	Sort information about historical times and people from illustrated texts using graphic organizers in small groups	Sequence information about historical times and people from illustrated texts using graphic organizers in small groups	Connect information about historical times and people from illustrated texts using graphic organizers (e.g., timelines)	
TOPIC-RELATED LANGUAGE: Students at all levels of English language proficiency interact with grade-level words and expressions, such as: historical times, communication						

See expanded  
version of this strand  
on pp. 26-27

## Strands of Language Development (Grades 3-5)

## ELD Standard 4: The Language of Science

	Example Topic	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Emerging	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6 - Reaching
WRITING	Earth's History	Label features of the Earth base don diagrams or models (e.g., its layers)	Clarify features of the Earth, past or present, from diagrams or graphic organizers using phrases or short sentences	Describe features of the Earth, past or present, from diagrams or graphic organizers using related sentences	Differentiate features of the Earthin past, present or future from diagrams or graphic organizers using paragraphs	Compose fictional and non-fictional mult-paragraph pieces about the Earth's features	
		<b>Cognitive Function:</b> Using the accompanying sheet, identify the cognitive function for this strand. Does it apply to all of the model performance indicators? What might need to change so all of the model performance indicators demonstrate the same cognitive complexity? Discuss and record your reasons for choosing the cognitive function for this strand.					

## Strands of Language Development (Grade 6-8)

## ELD Standard 2: The Language of Language Arts

	Example Topic	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Emerging	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6 - Reaching
SPEAKING	Human Interest	Describe persons or objects in human interest stories (e.g., “Girls Talking”) from visual frames or media excerpts	Relate main ideas of human interest stories from visual frames or media excerpts (e.g., news broadcasts)	State reasons for the ‘interest’ in human interest stories from visual frames or media excerpts	Apply ideas from human interests stories from visual frames or media excerpts to personal experiences	Defend and justify stances or points of view in human interest stories from various sources	
	Cognitive Function: Using the accompanying sheet, identify the cognitive function for this strand. Does it apply to all of the model performance indicators? What might need to change so all of the model performance indicators demonstrate the same cognitive complexity? Discuss and record your reasons for choosing the cognitive function for this strand.						

**Figure O: Guiding Questions for the Components of WIDA English Language Development Strands****GRADE:** \_\_\_\_\_**ELD STANDARD:** \_\_\_\_\_**EXAMPLE TOPIC:**

What is one of the topics addressed in the selected content standard(s)?

**CONNECTION:** Which state content standards, including the Common Core, form the basis of related lessons or a unit of study? What are the essential concepts and skills embedded in the content standards? What is the language associated with these grade level concepts and skills?

**EXAMPLE CONTEXT FOR LANGUAGE USE:** What is the purpose of the content work, task, or product? What roles or identities do the students assume? What register is required of the task? What are the genres of text types with which the students are interacting?

COGNITIVE FUNCTION: What is the level of cognitive engagement for the given task? Does the level of cognitive engagement match or exceed that of the content standards?						
Language Domain(s): How will learners process and use language?	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Emerging	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6 – Reaching
	A Strand of Model Performance Indicators:  What language are the students expected to process or produce at each level of proficiency?  Which language functions reflect the cognitive function at each level of proficiency?  Which instructional supports (sensory, graphic, and interactive) are necessary for students to access content?					
TOPIC-RELATED LANGUAGE: With which grade-level words and expressions will all students interact?						



**GRADE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ELD STANDARD:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EXAMPLE TOPIC:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CONNECTION:**

**EXAMPLE CONTEXT FOR LANGUAGE USE:**

**COGNITIVE FUNCTION:**

DOMAIN:	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Emerging	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6 – Reaching
TOPIC-RELATED LANGUAGE:						

## Example Language Features

	Level 1-3	Level 2-4	Level 3-5	Level 6 - Reaching
<b>Linguistic Complexity</b> Discourse Level				
<b>Language Forms &amp; Conventions</b> Sentence Level				
<b>Vocabulary Usage</b> Word/Phrase Level				

**GRADE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ELD STANDARD:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EXAMPLE TOPIC:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CONNECTION:**

**EXAMPLE CONTEXT FOR LANGUAGE USE:**

**COGNITIVE FUNCTION:**

DOMAIN:	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Emerging	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging	Level 6 – Reaching
<b>TOPIC-RELATED LANGUAGE:</b>						

## Example Language Features

	Level 1-3	Level 2-4	Level 3-5	Level 6 - Reaching
<b>Linguistic Complexity</b> Discourse Level				
<b>Language Forms &amp; Conventions</b> Sentence Level				
<b>Vocabulary Usage</b> Word/Phrase Level				



**The Cornerstone of WIDA's Standards:  
Guiding Principles of Language Development**

1. Students' languages and cultures are valuable resources to be tapped and incorporated into schooling.

Escamilla & Hopewell (2010); Goldenberg & Coleman (2010); Garcia (2005); Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri (2002); González, Moll, & Amanti (2005); Scarcella (1990)

2. Students' home, school, and community experiences influence their language development.

Nieto (2008); Payne (2003); Collier (1995); California State Department of Education (1986)

3. Students draw on their metacognitive, metalinguistic, and metacultural awareness to develop proficiency in additional languages.

Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan (2009); Bialystok (2007); Chamot & O'Malley (1994); Bialystok (1991); Cummins (1978)

4. Students' academic language development in their native language facilitates their academic language development in English. Conversely, students' academic language development in English informs their academic language development in their native language.

Escamilla & Hopewell (2010); Gottlieb, Katz, & Ernst-Slavit (2009); Tabors (2008); Espinosa (2009); August & Shanahan (2006); Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian (2006); Snow (2005); Genesee, Paradis, & Crago (2004); August & Shanahan (2006); Riches & Genesee (2006); Gottlieb (2003); Schleppegrell & Colombi (2002); Lindholm & Molina (2000); Pardo & Tinajero (1993)

5. Students learn language and culture through meaningful use and interaction.

Brown (2007); Garcia & Hamayan, (2006); Garcia (2005); Kramsch (2003); Díaz-Rico & Weed (1995); Halliday & Hasan (1989); Damen (1987)

6. Students use language in functional and communicative ways that vary according to context.

Schleppegrell (2004); Halliday (1976); Finocchiaro & Brumfit (1983)

7. Students develop language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing interdependently, but at different rates and in different ways.

Gottlieb & Hamayan (2007); Spolsky (1989); Vygotsky (1962)

8. Students' development of academic language and academic content knowledge are inter-related processes.

Gibbons (2009); Collier & Thomas (2009); Gottlieb, Katz, & Ernst-Slavit (2009); Echevarria, Vogt, & Short (2008); Zwiers (2008); Gee (2007); Bailey (2007); Mohan (1986)

9. Students' development of social, instructional, and academic language, a complex and long-term process, is the foundation for their success in school.

Anstrom, et.al. (2010); Francis, Lesaux, Kieffer, & Rivera (2006); Bailey & Butler (2002); Cummins (1979)

10. Students' access to instructional tasks requiring complex thinking is enhanced when linguistic complexity and instructional support match their levels of language proficiency.

Gottlieb, Katz, & Ernst-Slavit (2009); Gibbons (2009, 2002); Vygotsky (1962)



## The WIDA CAN DO Philosophy

The WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) Consortium has been built by educators who work with English language learners (ELLs) in their classrooms, schools, districts, and states. As a group of dedicated professionals from multiple disciplines (including, but not limited to, curriculum and instruction, language education, evaluation research, applied linguistics, and measurement), our team serves as a conduit for bridging language theory to research and research to practice as informed by assessment. We approach the development and dissemination of our tools and resources as a means for educators to gain a deeper and richer understanding of their own work with ELLs.

WIDA has a CAN DO philosophy, which accentuates the positive qualities and assets of our ELLs. Throughout the process of developing our products and services, WIDA envisions our students as contributors to the changing educational landscape as we serve as advocates on their behalf. In representing its member states, the goal of the Consortium is to promote the accomplishments and potential of ELL students throughout the greater educational community.

**Our CAN DO philosophy is visible in our Principles of Language Development.** As a cornerstone of our language standards, these principles, supported by a strong literature base, highlight how students develop and use language. We recognize the critical role of academic language as a vehicle for students to access grade-level content, actively engage in learning, and succeed in school and beyond.

**Our CAN DO philosophy is visible in the WIDA English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards, PreKindergarten through Grade 12.** Since 2004, WIDA has designed standards around the language demands ELLs encounter in classrooms; that is, the language of school. In doing so, we recognize the importance of students' development of social and instructional language. However, to help guide the academic success of ELLs, our efforts have centered on representing the academic language requisite for students to access to grade-level content. The WIDA ELP Standards help

educators set reasonable expectations for students' language development and recognize the growth in their students' academic English language proficiency.

**Our CAN DO philosophy is visible in the CAN DO Descriptors.** Based on survey research across WIDA states, this resource was originally intended to support teachers' use of ACCESS for ELLs test results to inform their instructional practice and share language expectations with family members. Today, the Descriptors enjoy wide-spread use throughout the school year as language teachers and content teachers co-plan and co-construct lessons and units differentiated according to what ELLs at different proficiency levels CAN DO in each language domain.

**Our CAN DO philosophy is visible in all our assessments.** We built ACCESS for ELLs, our K-12 annual accountability measure, as a three-tiered test so that students encounter questions targeted at their current range of English language proficiency. Students are thus able to show what they can do now, rather than what they cannot yet do. Every year, we replace approximately one-third of all test items to ascertain an accurate measurement of students' linguistic abilities and ensure that the assessment reflects our most current understanding of how academic language can best be measured in each language domain. Our philosophy carries over to the WIDA MODEL, a screening or benchmark language proficiency measure that provides teachers a tool for making initial placement decisions and data for instructional planning. With the development of our FLARE products and services, Language Learning Targets will serve as the foundation for gaining formative data on our ELLs. Finally, the ONPAR Science and Mathematics assessments will show that even beginning ELLs can express content knowledge in mathematics and science on large-scale tests through innovative item types that significantly reduce the language load and engage students with interactive computer-based response modes.

**Our CAN DO philosophy is visible in our professional development.** We believe that ELLs are individuals who bring knowledge, skills, and strengths to their education. We also believe that educators possess the key to unleashing their students' potential. Our goal is to provide educators with supports, services, and resources to sustain long-term, ongoing, and onsite professional growth in their journey to educational excellence. For this, we have developed and implemented a variety of opportunities for schools and districts to incorporate into a comprehensive professional development system for their educators, ranging from one-hour webinars to semester-long courses. Through these diverse opportunities, we are able to provide more access to more educators. CLIMBS is a semester long course that brings school teams together to collaborate in the planning, instruction, and assessment of ELLs. Our Certification academies are another way we are trying to build capacity across our Consortium in the dissemination of our



products and services. Currently, through LADDER for ELLs, we are creating another professional development opportunity for educators to build capacity in their schools and districts in the appropriate use of data to inform systemic and systematic decisions in the education of ELLs.

**Our CAN DO philosophy is visible in our research.** WIDA's ongoing research focuses on five main areas of inquiry: alignment, the relationship between academic language proficiency and academic achievement, classroom implementation of standards, teacher development, and policy guidance. The research team seeks to provide timely, meaningful, and actionable results to stakeholders. Data from our research studies have served to verify the alignment of WIDA's standards and assessments to state content standards, validate the results of WIDA assessments, define academic language development, and determine the time needed to achieve academic language proficiency. The WIDA research team also provides states and districts with technical assistance on accountability, data management, and ACCESS for ELLs score interpretation. This assistance builds local capacity and encourages the development of policies that are in the best interests of ELLs. All our research is aimed at promoting awareness of the unique traits and abilities of ELLs and how educators and policy-makers alike can foster their achievement.

As educational partners, the efforts of all stakeholders, from paraprofessionals to superintendents, make a difference in the education of our ELL students. Together, by focusing on what our ELLs CAN DO, we can send a powerful message that students from diverse linguistic, cultural, and experiential backgrounds enrich our schools and communities.



# WIDA FOCUS ON Differentiation PART 1



## In This Issue

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## Introduction

English language learners can reach the same high content-area standards as all students, but they need different pathways. All teachers and administrators who have ELLs in their classes and schools need to know how to differentiate for ELLs because all educators—not just ESL or bilingual educators—share responsibility for ELL achievement.

This WIDA Focus Bulletin will be presented in two parts, which will together provide a useful planning template and step-by-step explanations of how teachers (classroom/content-area, special education, literacy, ESL, bilingual) can differentiate their grade-level content and language instruction and assessment for the ELLs in their classes. But first, what exactly do we mean by differentiating for ELLs?



## Differentiation through scaffolding and support

### DEFINITIONS:

**SCAFFOLD:** an educator's intentional act of building upon students' already acquired skills and knowledge to teach new skills

**SUPPORT:** use of instructional strategies or tools used to assist students in accessing content necessary for classroom understanding or communication and to help construct meaning from language

Differentiating instruction and assessment for ELLs is an approach that teachers can use to make their grade-level content-area instruction comprehensible and challenging to all of the students in their classes, with specific attention to the diverse language and learning needs of their ELLs. This approach also enables every teacher to **scaffold** and **support** their ELLs' movement along the continuum of second language development. Differentiating for ELLs supports students' active engagement in all of their classes every day, which in turn leads to greater equity and achievement for these learners.

MAY 2012

# The differentiated assignment/assessment template

Shelley Fairbairn and Stephaney Jones-Vo introduce the differentiated assignment/assessment template in their book *Differentiating Instruction and Assessment for English Language Learners: A Guide for K-12 Teachers* (2010). This template is a powerful framework that teachers can use to design assignments and assessments that reflect the big ideas or enduring understandings that all students need to learn within the standards-driven units and lessons they teach. It can also be used to generate realistic, meaningful, and measurable content and language objectives and assessments that are appropriate for all students, particularly for ELLs at all five levels of English language proficiency (ELP). According to Fairbairn and Jones-Vo,

*In order to think about how to differentiate assignments for ELLs, we must consider the aspects of the assignment that can or should be differentiated. In most cases, the standards-based content or topic (from the curriculum) must remain the same at all levels of language proficiency, since all students must generally be taught to the same set of standards. Therefore, the aspects of the assignment that can be differentiated are the language-based expectations and the scaffolding and support (p. 83).*

Fairbairn and Jones-Vo include the following sample template to guide planning.

(STUDENT'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY LEVEL LISTED HERE)
Language-Based Expectations:
Standards-Based Content or Topic (from the curriculum):
Scaffolding and Support:

Aha! WIDA Standards users: Do you notice how the format of this template mirrors the parts of a model performance indicator: language function, content stem, support?

Sample differentiating instruction and assessment template. © Caslon. Source: Fairbairn, S. & Jones-Vo, S. (2010). *Differentiating Instruction and Assessment for English Language Learners: A Guide for K-12 Teachers*, p. 84. Philadelphia: Caslon. Reprinted with permission.

Teachers write **language-based expectations** (row 1) for each ELP level based on the WIDA Can Do Descriptors (available at [www.wida.us](http://www.wida.us)) or another standards-based resource. The Can Do Descriptors are a part of WIDA's larger Can Do Philosophy that emphasize the positive qualities and assets our ELLs bring to the classroom, allowing educators to build on what they already know and can do. The Can Do language-based expectations provide a foundation for generating language objectives and authentic assessments, which should be differentiated for ELLs based on their ELP levels and other relevant background factors.

The **standards-based content or topic** (row 2) is derived from the curriculum and is expressed on the template in terms of big ideas or enduring understandings (see side bar on p. 3 for explanation of these terms). These big ideas provide the basis for generating content objectives which are more or less the same for every student in the class, including ELLs.

Teachers write the types of **scaffolding and support** (row 3) that each ELL in their class needs in order to engage with and learn in each instructional activity. Like language objectives, teachers differentiate the specific scaffolding and support strategies that they select to build on the particular language, literacy, and learning strengths of the ELLs in their classes.

## WHAT DOES DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT FOR ELLS LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?

To answer this question, we will explore Fairbairn & Jones-Vo's scenario of how one assignment within an elementary school unit on the topic of the rainforest can be differentiated for ELLs at all levels of English language proficiency (pp. 262-266). We focus here on the hypothetical example of Mr. Nelson's self-contained fifth-grade class which includes three ELLs: Marco, Julia, and Amitabh.

## MAKING SENSE OF THE ELP LEVELS

Mr. Nelson begins learning more about the ELLs in his class by paying particular attention to their levels of English language proficiency. One way he can do this is by examining his students' results from an ELP assessment. Although two students may display the same overall composite score, like Julia and Amitabh, they may reflect two very different profiles. For this reason, it is especially

important that Mr. Nelson also considers his students' individual language domain scores. A student's performance in each language domain provides a more comprehensive and realistic profile than that derived from the overall composite score. Mr. Nelson should also gather information about his ELLs' oral language and literacy development in their home languages and their prior schooling.

MARCO, LEVEL 1 ELL	JULIA, LEVEL 3 ELL	AMITABH, LEVEL 3 ELL
<p><b>Born:</b> in Brazil</p> <p><b>Home language:</b> Brazilian Portuguese</p> <p><b>Home language skills:</b> can read and write in Portuguese, but probably below grade level</p> <p><b>Enrolled in U.S. schools:</b> earlier this year</p> <p><b>Educational background:</b> 4 years of schooling in Brazil at 3 different schools with frequent absences</p> <p><b>Background in English:</b> informal exposure outside of school</p> <p><b>Placement test scores:</b> Level 1 Listening Level 1 Speaking Level 1 Reading Level 1 Writing</p>	<p><b>Born:</b> in U.S.</p> <p><b>Home language:</b> Mexican Spanish</p> <p><b>Home language skills:</b> informal speaking and listening, does not read or write in Spanish</p> <p><b>Enrolled in U.S. schools:</b> in Kindergarten</p> <p><b>Educational background:</b> 5.5 years in U.S. school</p> <p><b>Background in English:</b> lifelong exposure within and outside school</p> <p><b>ACCESS for ELLs test scores:</b> Level 5 Listening Level 4 Speaking Level 3 Reading Level 2 Writing</p>	<p><b>Born:</b> in India</p> <p><b>Home language:</b> Gujarati</p> <p><b>Home language skills:</b> unknown</p> <p><b>Enrolled in U.S. schools:</b> in the middle of last year (4th grade)</p> <p><b>Educational background:</b> 3.5 years of consistent schooling in India, 1 year in U.S. school</p> <p><b>Background in English:</b> 3.5 years of British English instruction with little practice in oral language</p> <p><b>ACCESS for ELLs test scores:</b> Level 2 Listening Level 1 Speaking Level 4 Reading Level 5 Writing</p>

## Planning the Lesson

Now that we know more about the students in Mr. Nelson's class, we can walk through the planning process and consider how the content and language objectives of a particular lesson will be introduced to them.

### SPECIFYING CONTENT OBJECTIVES

Mr. Nelson's rainforest lesson includes a culminating writing assignment that requires students to write a three-paragraph essay describing features of the rainforest before and after deforestation. This assignment will address two of the **big ideas or enduring understandings** that Mr. Nelson has written for the whole unit: 1) *Rainforests worldwide are threatened by deforestation* and 2) *Citizens can take action to challenge deforestation*.

Content objectives are written for each lesson, and reflect the big ideas that all students must learn in order to succeed in a particular instructional unit. They should be the same for all students, including ELLs. Mr. Nelson writes the following content objectives on the board for all students:

**TERMINOLOGY**  
NOTE: some educators may use "learning targets" or other terms to refer to content-related "big ideas/enduring understandings" at the unit level. These goals are broader in nature than the objectives of a particular lesson.



## CONTENT OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to...

- Describe features of the rainforest before deforestation
- Describe features of the rainforest after deforestation
- Compare and contrast features of the rainforest before and after deforestation
- Prepare a persuasive argument for or against deforestation to present orally to the town council

Mr. Nelson holds high expectations for his students, and he includes critical thinking objectives into all of his lessons. Students need to use higher-order thinking to *compare*, *contrast*, and *persuade* than they do to describe. English language learners at all levels of language proficiency can and should be engaged in higher-order thinking tasks, but they may need support to express their ideas through language.

## SELECTING THE LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES

Although Mr. Nelson is not an ESL teacher, he assumes responsibility not only for content objectives but also for language objectives for all of the students in his class. Mr. Nelson is committed to sharing responsibility for learning and achievement of the ELLs in his class with Ms. Krukowski, the ESL teacher who works with Marco, Amitabh, and Julia, and he knows that non-ELLs can also benefit tremendously from his careful attention to academic language across the content areas. Thus, he routinely develops language objectives to accompany his content objectives for each lesson.

Language objectives need to be differentiated according to students' ELP levels and other important background factors. Mr. Nelson writes the following language objectives on the board for all of his students.

## LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to...

- Understand and use key vocabulary orally and in writing, such as:
  - *rainforest, deforestation, erosion/erode, habitat, destruction/destroy, ecosystem*
- Use oral and written language to *describe*, *compare*, *contrast*, and *persuade*, which might involve practicing with:
  - *organizational features of oral and written arguments*
  - *conjunctions (and, but, or, yet, so, if, even though, unless, etc.)*

Notice that Mr. Nelson's language objectives focus on 1) key content vocabulary, complexity, and grammar; 2) reading, writing, listening, and speaking for academic purposes; and 3) the specific academic language functions *describe*, *compare*, *contrast*, and *persuade*.



## USING THE DIFFERENTIATED ASSIGNMENT TEMPLATE TO SUPPORT ELLS

Equipped with information about what his ELLs can do in English and in their home languages, as well as a clear understanding of the content and language objectives for all students, Mr. Nelson is prepared to identify the types of scaffolds and supports that his ELLs will need to engage with and learn from the activities he prepares for his class. The differentiated assignment/assessment template focuses his work.

Mr. Nelson begins filling out the template with the content-based expectations for all students (row 2) as these are the same for all students. Then, Mr. Nelson will fill out the language-based expectations for each student (row 1). Each student will have different language expectations based on their language proficiency levels. Mr. Nelson will create expectations that correspond with each student's current ELP level. For guidance in drafting these expectations, Mr. Nelson can look at the WIDA Can Do Descriptors. Finally, Mr. Nelson will fill out the part of the template that details supports for each student (row 3) and support he will use with all students (right hand column). See his completed template on p. 5.

Aha! Do you notice how the language objectives address the three criteria of WIDA's Performance Definitions: vocabulary usage, linguistic complexity, and language forms and conventions?

LEVEL 1 (MARCO)	LEVEL 2 (JULIA)	LEVEL 5 (AMITABH)	ALL STUDENTS
<b>LANGUAGE-BASED EXPECTATIONS:</b> WRITING Produce descriptive words or phrases	<b>LANGUAGE-BASED EXPECTATIONS:</b> WRITING Write simple sentences using descriptive language and occasional academic content-related vocabulary	<b>LANGUAGE BASED EXPECTATIONS:</b> WRITING Write a three-paragraph comparative essay using descriptive language, a variety of academic content related vocabulary, and complex sentence structures	<b>LANGUAGE-BASED EXPECTATIONS:</b> WRITING Write a three-paragraph comparative essay using descriptive language, a variety of academic content related vocabulary, and complex sentence structures
<b>STANDARDS-BASED CONTENT OR TOPIC (FROM THE CURRICULUM):</b> Features of the rainforest before and after deforestation			
<b>SUPPORTS:</b> Using <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• experiences gained in a field trip to a botanical center</li> <li>• a graphic organizer (T-chart) to show content understanding</li> <li>• word and picture cards featuring pretaught vocabulary (to be used when labeling the graphic organizer to show content understanding)</li> <li>• pictorially supported rainforest texts</li> <li>• a chant to assist students in remembering key phrases and vocabulary</li> <li>• realia related to rainforest products (e.g., fruit, medicinal plants, wood carvings)</li> <li>• a think-aloud demonstration of labeling</li> <li>• photographs of forestation and deforestation to guide writing</li> </ul>	<b>SUPPORTS:</b> Using <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• experiences gained in a field trip to a botanical center</li> <li>• graphic organizers (T-charts) to guide writing and show content understanding</li> <li>• pictorially supported rainforest texts</li> <li>• pretaught vocabulary</li> <li>• a chant to assist students in remembering key phrases and vocabulary</li> <li>• realia related to rainforest products (e.g., fruit, medicinal plants, wood carvings)</li> <li>• a think-aloud demonstration of sentence writing</li> <li>• photographs of forestation and deforestation to guide writing</li> </ul>	<b>SUPPORTS:</b> Using <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• experiences gained in a field trip to a botanical center</li> <li>• graphic organizers (T-charts) to guide writing and show content understanding</li> <li>• grade-level rainforest texts</li> <li>• a chant with written lyrics to assist students in remembering key phrases and vocabulary</li> <li>• a bilingual dictionary</li> </ul>	<b>SUPPORTS:</b> Using <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• experiences gained in a field trip to a botanical center</li> <li>• a graphic organizer (T-chart) to guide writing</li> <li>• grade-level rainforest texts</li> <li>• a chant to assist students in remembering key phrases and vocabulary</li> </ul>

Differentiated assignment/assessment template for a fifth grade writing assignment. Source: Fairbairn & Jones-Vo, 2010, adapted and reprinted with permission from Caslon Publishing.



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All teachers (classroom/content-area, special education, literacy, ESL, bilingual) must consider several factors when differentiating instruction for the English language learners in their classrooms. We saw that Mr. Nelson first needed to get to know his students, understand what skills and assets his ELLs bring to the classroom, and identify their ELP levels. This information then enabled him to identify appropriate language based-expectations and supports for each of his ELLs. As a result of Mr. Nelson's differentiated writing activity, his students will be able to successfully demonstrate their understanding of the standards-based content objectives.

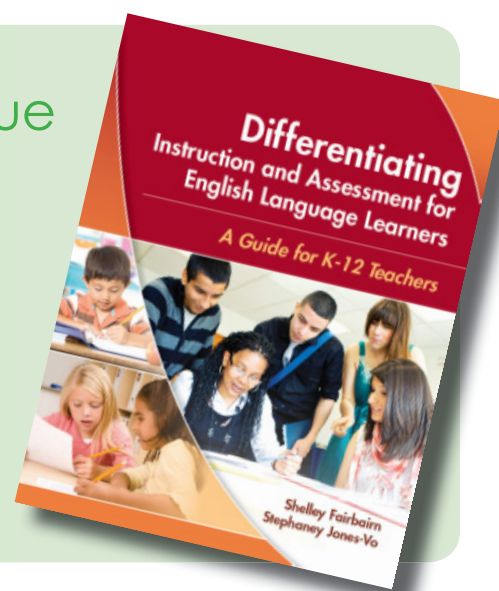
Part 2 of WIDA's Focus on Differentiation will continue the discussion of Mr. Nelson, his students, and the lesson on rainforests to explore how teachers can implement instructional scaffolding and support strategies such as those listed in the template on p. 5 for their students. It will also explore differentiated classroom assessment of ELLs.

## Featured in this Issue

Differentiating Instruction  
and Assessment for English  
Language Learners:  
A Guide for K-12 Teachers

*by Shelley Fairbairn and  
Stephaney Jones-Vo*

Available at [www.caslonpublishing.com](http://www.caslonpublishing.com)



## Feedback and Sharing

Do you have ideas for what you'd like to see in a future WIDA Focus Bulletin? Do you have personal experiences you can share about the instruction and assessment of language learners? We hope to include many of your stories and suggestions in future issues of this bulletin. Please send an email to [help@wida.us](mailto:help@wida.us) and write "Focus Bulletin idea" in the subject line.

## WIDA's Mission

WIDA supports academic language development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse students through high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional development for educators.



# WIDA FOCUS ON Differentiation PART 2

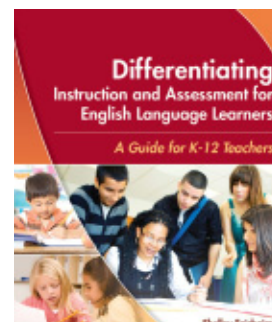


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## Introduction

This Bulletin represents the second and final part of WIDA's Focus on Differentiation. In Part 1 (May 2012), we explored how teachers can differentiate instruction for the English language learners (ELLs) in their classrooms by following a helpful planning template adapted from Shelley Fairbairn and Stephaney Jones-Vo's book, *Differentiating Instruction and Assessment for English Language Learners: A Guide for K-12 Teachers*. Using the example of Mr. Nelson's fifth grade general education classroom, we demonstrated in Part 1 how to establish appropriate standards-based content and language objectives for a lesson while maintaining consistently high expectations for all his students' content learning. Mr. Nelson accomplished this by identifying specific **scaffolds** and **supports** that he could implement for each of his ELLs, Marco, Julia, and Amitabh, during a lesson on rainforests. This Bulletin will examine what it looks like for Mr. Nelson to put these strategies and tools, such as graphic organizers, parental involvement, and flexible grouping, into practice. Lastly, we will showcase how Mr. Nelson evaluates his students' performances in both content and language on their rainforest assignment.



## DEFINITIONS:

**SCAFFOLD:** an educator's intentional act of building upon students' already acquired skills and knowledge to teach new skills

**SUPPORT:** use of instructional strategies or tools used to assist students in accessing content necessary for classroom understanding or communication and to help construct meaning from language

DECEMBER 2012



Here is a reminder of each sample ELL student's background and characteristics:

MARCO, LEVEL 1 ELL	JULIA, LEVEL 3 ELL	AMITABH, LEVEL 3 ELL
<p><b>Born:</b> in Brazil</p> <p><b>Home language:</b> Brazilian Portuguese</p> <p><b>Home language skills:</b> can read and write in Portuguese, but probably below grade level</p> <p><b>Enrolled in U.S. schools:</b> earlier this year</p> <p><b>Educational background:</b> 4 years of schooling in Brazil at 3 different schools with frequent absences</p> <p><b>Background in English:</b> informal exposure outside of school</p> <p><b>Placement test scores:</b> Level 1 Listening Level 1 Speaking Level 1 Reading Level 1 Writing</p>	<p><b>Born:</b> in U.S.</p> <p><b>Home language:</b> Mexican Spanish</p> <p><b>Home language skills:</b> informal speaking and listening, does not read or write in Spanish</p> <p><b>Enrolled in U.S. schools:</b> in Kindergarten</p> <p><b>Educational background:</b> 5.5 years in U.S. school</p> <p><b>Background in English:</b> lifelong exposure within and outside school</p> <p><b>ACCESS for ELLs test scores:</b> Level 5 Listening Level 4 Speaking Level 3 Reading Level 2 Writing</p>	<p><b>Born:</b> in India</p> <p><b>Home language:</b> Gujarati</p> <p><b>Home language skills:</b> unknown</p> <p><b>Enrolled in U.S. schools:</b> in the middle of last year (4th grade)</p> <p><b>Educational background:</b> 3.5 years of consistent schooling in India, 1 year in U.S. school</p> <p><b>Background in English:</b> 3.5 years of British English instruction with little practice in oral language</p> <p><b>ACCESS for ELLs test scores:</b> Level 2 Listening Level 1 Speaking Level 4 Reading Level 5 Writing</p>

## Building on student strengths

Mr. Nelson knows that although Marco and Julia are both beginning writers in English, they have very different content area knowledge as well as oral language and literacy in English and in their home languages. Likewise, Amitabh has a different set of skills and strengths that can facilitate his growth. Mr. Nelson looks for creative ways to support the engagement and learning of all three ELL students in his class.

Using the strength-based language of the WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Mr. Nelson focuses on what Julia can do with oral language in English to scaffold her literacy development in English. Instructional conversations, books on tape, videos, oral-written retellings, and the language experience approach are all powerful strategies that Mr. Nelson uses for this purpose. These strategies also benefit all students in his class who have strong oral language in social English but are continually developing their grade-level academic literacy skills. These ideas represent some ways that Mr. Nelson differentiates his instruction and assessment not only for ELLs, but also for all of the diverse learners in his class.

Julia’s teacher can help her achieve the language and content objectives of the lesson by using a T-chart graphic organizer as an instructional scaffold. The T-chart can assist Julia in meeting the expectations that she will describe, compare, and contrast features of the rainforest before and after deforestation. It is very important that Mr. Nelson help his students understand that the graphic organizer is both a content organizer *and* a language support.

Across many of his units, Mr. Nelson uses the T-chart as a language support for comparing and contrasting. First, Mr. Nelson shows the class pictures of a rainforest before and after deforestation and asks students what similarities and differences they notice. After a few responses from students, Mr. Nelson tells students that he wants to focus on what language scientists would use when comparing and contrasting the rainforest. He shows the students the T-chart and reminds them that they have used the graphic organizer in the past as a content organizer but today they will be using it in a different way. He goes on to do a think aloud about how the class can use

different words/phrases when comparing and contrasting different concepts or ideas. He offers a variety of words or phrases that relate to similarities and differences (see examples below), and models where they fit best in the graphic organizer. He tells his students that these words and phrases can be used in a variety of ways but today they will focus on using these words to compare and contrast the rainforest before and after deforestation. He then models how he would use the words and phrases with the rainforest pictures:

- “Before deforestation, rainforests have lots of plants and animals. But after deforestation, animals and plants lose their habitats.”
- “There are many differences between rainforests before and after deforestation. One big difference is…”
- “The land continues to provide income to local people and companies.”

## Compare/Contrast Graphic Organizer

COMPARE	CONTRAST
Both...	While/Whereas...
...is like/the same as/similar to because...	...is different because...
One similarity is...	One difference is...
...continues to...	However...
...and...	...but...

Once filled out as shown above, the T-chart serves as a support for Julia to practice forming sentences incorporating the content of the lesson. Mr. Nelson pairs Julia up with a partner to practice adding the content about rainforests from a word bank to the T-chart, making sure to use vocabulary identified in the language objective. It is important to note that the supports Mr. Nelson provides can be generalized to other topics and subject areas. The purpose of the

T-chart activity is to provide the students with language structures that can be used throughout their academic experience—not just in the rainforest unit. Through the use of a T-chart, Mr. Nelson provides his students with language structures centered around comparison and contrast—structures used often throughout different academic subject areas. This is the value of using such a support.

For Marco, Mr. Nelson uses the three-part *preview-view-review* strategy (Freeman & Freeman, 2002) to purposefully draw on his home language as a scaffold for content learning. Since there is an important rainforest in Marco's birth country of Brazil, Mr. Nelson, Marco, and Marco's parents all look for resources (photographs, maps, videos, realia) presenting information about the rainforest in Brazil that can be used to preview and review the content together. Many of these materials may be in Portuguese.

First, Mr. Nelson encourages Marco to draw on his stronger language to *preview* features of the rainforest before and after deforestation on his own (before the lesson), perhaps using the resources gathered in Portuguese and conversations with his parents about the rainforest as scaffolding and support. Second, Marco *views* the content in English (during the lesson in Mr. Nelson's class). However, because Marco has activated and built some background knowledge about the rainforest through his first language at home, he is more likely to comprehend some of the big ideas of the lesson in English and pick up some new Science and Social Studies-related language. Third, Mr. Nelson encourages the school's ESL teacher, Ms. Krukowski, to *review* the content of the lesson with Marco (after the lesson) to deepen his understanding of the big ideas.

The preview-view-review strategy also allows Marco's parents, Ms. Krukowski, and maybe even other community members to be involved in and support Marco's education in ways that build on what they collectively know and can do, making the content relevant for Marco and reinforcing Mr. Nelson's instruction.



## Taking home language interactive support to the next level

Students' strengths in their home language can also be used to support their language development in English and in the home language. For example, Mr. Nelson knows that Julia speaks Spanish, Marco speaks Portuguese, and both of these languages are Latin-based. Mr. Nelson also knows that three other students in the class speak Spanish at home. Although Mr. Nelson only speaks English, he encourages Marco, Julia, and the three other Spanish-speakers to identify **cognates** in Spanish, English, and Portuguese (e.g., *destruction/destrucción*). Identifying cognates across languages is a powerful way for bilingual students to make connections between their two languages. Moreover, Mr. Nelson knows that

**COGNATES:** Words in different languages that have the same origins, sound similar, and mean the same thing. However, be careful using these. False cognates can cause confusion!

academic English has a strong base in Latin, which means that students who speak Latin-based languages and are familiar with the content topic can learn to use cognates as a strong scaffold for academic vocabulary development in English. Mr. Nelson invites these bilingual students to create bilingual word walls and bilingual books that include key content vocabulary in two languages. Although Gujarati is not a Latin-based language and therefore shares fewer cognates with English than Spanish or Portuguese, Mr. Nelson invites Amitabh to add Gujarati words to the multilingual word wall. This practice is aligned with his school's 21st century learning goal to value and promote multilingualism as an important part of global learning.

Amitabh brings very different strengths to Mr. Nelson's class. Like Julia, Amitabh is a level 3 ELL according to the composite score. Unlike Julia, Amitabh's reading and writing levels are higher than his listening and speaking levels; Mr. Nelson refers to the

## WIDA Can Do Descriptors

**WIDA Can Do Descriptors: Grade Level Cluster 3-5**  
For the given level of English language proficiency and with visual, graphic, or interactive supports through Level 4, English language learners can produce the language needed to:

	Level 1: Beginning	Level 2: Developing	Level 3: Expanding	Level 4: Bridging
<b>Speaking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words or phrases in context.</li> <li>Identify questions that require a response.</li> <li>Identify words or phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>
<b>Writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words or phrases in context.</li> <li>Identify questions that require a response.</li> <li>Identify words or phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>
<b>Reading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words or phrases in context.</li> <li>Identify questions that require a response.</li> <li>Identify words or phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>
<b>Thinking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words or phrases in context.</li> <li>Identify questions that require a response.</li> <li>Identify words or phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> <li>Identify words and phrases that are new to them.</li> </ul>

WIDA Can Do Descriptors and sees that students with level 5 writing skills can be expected to successfully complete the writing assignment in English and predicts that Amitabh's work will show only occasional evidence of his status as a language learner. However, when it comes to speaking in English, Mr. Nelson knows that he needs to differentiate his instruction and assessment to include Amitabh and Marco who are both at beginning stages of oral language development in English.

Many of the strategies that are appropriate for Marco (using photographs, realia, video, preview-view-review) provide strong scaffolding and support for Amitabh's movement along the continuum of second language development in speaking. Mr. Nelson also draws on Amitabh's strengths in reading and writing in English to support Amitabh's development of the oral English he needs to participate in the field trip to the botanical garden, engage in classroom discussions, and contribute to the persuasive argument students will present to the town council. Mr. Nelson includes many opportunities for Marco and Amitabh to talk about the content they are learning at their instructional listening and speaking levels in English with the scaffolds and supports they need for success. Another important oral language development strategy involves Mr. Nelson's careful selection of partners and group members for activities, so that Marco and Amitabh can practice their skills and learn from their peers.

## Pulling it all together in flexible groupings

Mr. Nelson doesn't focus on what individual ELLs like Marco, Julia, and Amitabh can do with reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English and other languages in isolation. Instead, Mr. Nelson integrates the four domains in the activities he structures in class, and he groups students to purposefully draw on their strengths as individuals and in groups in mutually beneficial ways.

Sometimes, Mr. Nelson groups ELLs at similar levels of English language proficiency in one domain (e.g., speaking) together to focus instruction on a particular scaffold, support, or strategy that is intended to benefit this group. For example, in order to prepare Amitabh and Marco to participate in an oral presentation of a persuasive argument to the town council, Mr. Nelson may group Marco and Amitabh together to practice transition words they will need to orally compare and contrast in English (e.g., *On one hand.... On the other hand....*) or to make a persuasive summary statement (e.g., *This presentation clearly shows...*), and the ESL teacher, Ms. Krukowski, may support this language-focused work in a push-in/inclusion or pull-out capacity.

Other times, Mr. Nelson intentionally structures groups of students at different levels of English language proficiency so that they can draw on the strengths of their peers, including native English speakers. For example, Mr. Nelson might group Julia and Amitabh together so that they can use Amitabh's strong writing in English to support Julia's writing development. They can draw on Julia's strong oral language in English to support Amitabh's oral language development in English.

Mr. Nelson includes all of his students when he considers different grouping arrangements. For example, sometimes he groups Marco, Julia, and the other Spanish speakers during a vocabulary building lesson so they can explore cognates together and stimulate connections across languages that one student may not have noticed on his or her own. This kind of reciprocal teaching benefits students as they work together to learn content, develop social and academic language and literacy in English, and integrates students from diverse backgrounds into a strong community of learners.



## Evaluating achievement of language and content objectives

Mr. Nelson also grades his students on their performance relative to the differentiated objectives he wrote for them (see Part 1, May 2012). Teachers assess student performance by collecting evidence of what their students can do in the range of activities that they organize for the class and evaluate students' performance relative to their realistic content and language objectives. The performance-based evidence will take different forms depending on the nature of the activity and the content and language expectations for student performance (e.g., observation of students' oral language use, possibly audio or videotaped, assessed with checklists; samples of student writing assessed with rubrics). For example, Marco (currently level 1) demonstrates his achievement of the content objectives by correctly placing photographs of the rainforest before deforestation on the left side of a T-chart graphic organizer and photos of the rainforest after deforestation on the right side. He demonstrates his achievement of the language objectives by correctly labeling the photographs with target vocabulary words in English that he has copied down from this print-rich classroom environment, and by writing a few short, simple phrases (with errors) about the pictures that he heard orally and saw in writing quite a few times throughout the lesson. Even though Marco is at the early stages of English language development, he is clearly engaged in the class activities. Marco has achieved the content and language objectives of this lesson for a level 1 student and Mr. Nelson grades him accordingly.

For Julia, Mr. Nelson can evaluate her completion of the T-chart with visual support and the help of a word bank. To measure her growth in language, Mr. Thompson can look for the use of the language he modeled in the graphic organizer in her completed sentences. For example, he may evaluate her use of pre-taught sequential language and conjunctions to form simple compound sentences. He will not lower Julia's grade as a result of other grammatical or mechanical errors in her English, as he will only evaluate based on his particular language objectives related to this lesson.

Finally, Amitabh's writing can be expected to contain slight errors related to second language acquisition and slightly below grade-

level complexity. But if his representation of the content is accurate and all language expectations are met for his level of language proficiency, his grade should appropriately reflect that achievement.

## Strategies for Success

English language learners can reach the same high content-area standards as all students and as we have seen, they add tremendous richness to their classroom's learning environment with the unique strengths they bring with them to school. Teachers need to begin by identifying these individual and collective strengths, and they need to know how to differentiate content and language instruction and assessment for diverse learners in order to guide them to and along productive pathways. When all teachers—including elementary classroom and secondary content teachers, literacy and special education specialists, and ESL/bilingual educators—share responsibility for educating the ELLs in their classes, these learners can make great strides in simultaneously acquiring language and content knowledge.



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## Feedback and Ideas

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